

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Canceled)

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Canceled)

5. (Canceled)

6. (Canceled)

7. (Canceled)

8. (Canceled)

9. (Canceled)

10. **(Currently Amended)** An immunoagglutination immunoassay ~~which is carried out in the presence of said agent~~ for inhibiting decrease in measured values in immunoassays, comprising:

mixing a test sample with an agent for inhibiting decrease in measured values in immunoagglutination immunoassays, caused by an interfering substance(s), which agent is an ionic surfactant having a molecular weight of 1000 to 100,000, said ionic surfactant being a polymer in which a hydrophobic cyclic monomer(s) having an ionic functional group(s) is(are) polymerized to form a mixture of said test sample and said agent. ~~according to claim 1.~~

11. **(Currently Amended)** The immunoassay according to claim 10, comprising a first step of ~~bringing a~~ mixing said test sample ~~into contact~~ with said agent for inhibiting decrease in measured values in immunoagglutination immunoassays; and a second step of subjecting said

~~test sample mixture~~ to antigen-antibody immunoagglutination reaction with sensitized particles or with an antiserum to form a reacted mixture.

12. **(Currently Amended)** The immunoassay according to claim ~~10~~ 11, wherein said test sample is a biological sample.

13. **(Original)** The immunoassay according to claim 12, wherein said test sample is blood, serum or blood plasma.

14. **(Currently Amended)** The immunoassay according to claim ~~10~~ 11, wherein the concentration of said agent for inhibiting decrease in measured values in immunoassays in reaction solution is 0.01% to 5% (weight/volume).

15. **(Canceled)**

16. **(Canceled)**

17. **(Canceled)**

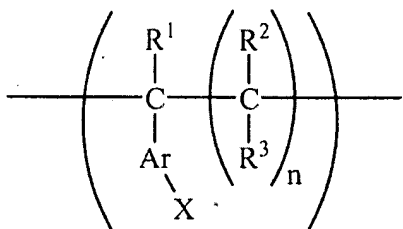
18. **(Canceled)**

19. **(Canceled)**

20. **(Canceled)**

21. **(New)** The immunoassay according to claim 11, further comprising a third step of determining the measured values of a target substance in said reacted mixture.

22. **(New)** The immunoassay according to claim 11, wherein said polymer comprises a recurring unit represented by the following Formula [I]:



[ I ]

wherein Ar represents a hydrophobic ring; X represents the ionic functional group;  $R^1$  to  $R^3$  independently represent hydrogen or alkyl; n represents an integer of 0 to 10; hydrogen atom(s) bound to a carbon atom(s) constituting Ar optionally being substituted with a substituent(s) which does(do) not adversely affect the effect of the present invention.

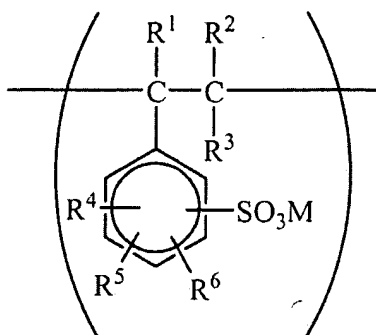
23. (New) The immunoassay according to claim 11 or 22, wherein said hydrophobic cyclic monomer is an aromatic monomer.

24. (New) The immunoassay according to claim 23, wherein said aromatic monomer has a benzene ring.

25. (New) The immunoassay according to claim 11, wherein said ionic functional group is sulfonic group or a salt thereof, carboxylic group or a salt thereof, or an amine.

26. (New) The immunoassay according to claim 25, wherein said ionic functional group is sulfonic group or a salt thereof.

27. (New) The immunoassay according to claim 22, wherein said recurring unit is represented by the following Formula [II]:



[ II ]

wherein M represents an atom or a group which becomes a monovalent cation in aqueous solution;  $R^1$  to  $R^3$  have the same meanings as said  $R^1$  to  $R^3$  in said Formula [I]; and  $R^4$  to  $R^6$  independently represent hydrogen, lower alkoxyl or lower alkyl.

28. (New) The immunoassay according to claim 25, wherein said recurring unit is an anethole sulfonic acid salt or styrene sulfonic acid salt.
29. (New) The immunoassay according to claim 22, further comprising a third step of determining the measured values of a target substance in said reacted mixture.
30. (New) The immunoassay according to claim 27, further comprising a third step of determining the measured values of a target substance in said reacted mixture.